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TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, MX

SUBJECT: FULBRIGHT TECHNICIANS EXCHANGE PROGRAM

1. MEXICAN EMBASSY SCIENCE COUNSELOR DR. EDMUNDO DE ALBA RECENTLY PROPOSED TO ARA/MEX THAT US AND CONACYT REPRESENTATIVES MEET AT AN EARLY DATE TO DISCUSS SUBJECT PROGRAM.

DE ALBA SUGGESTED THAT FOLLOWING SHOULD BE DISCUSSED:

1) REVISION OF PLAN OF OPERATIONS (HE DID NOT GIVE DETAILS ON WHAT REVISIONS MEXICANS MAY PROPOSE ALTHOUGH IN EARLIER DISCUSSIONS HE SAID CONACYT IS INTERESTED IN US BEARING ALL COSTS OF MEXICAN PARTICIPANTS EXCEPT INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL. THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE TO DEPARTMENT); 2) IMPROVEMENT OF PROCEDURES FOR DOCUMENTATION AND PLACEMENT OF CANDIDATES; 3) DISCUSSION OF PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND SUGGESTIONS FOR ALLEVIATING THEM IN CASES OF BOTH MEXICAN AND AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS; 4) DISCUSSION OF 1975-1976 PROGRAM CYCLE.

2. ALTHOUGH SUGGESTED AGENDA WAS BIT VAGUE, DEPARTMENT WAS NOT OPPOSED IN PRINCIPLE TO CONVOCAION OF SUCH A MEETING AND AGREED ON DATES OF AUGUST 11-12. HOWEVER, WE AGREED FOLLOWING ASSURANCES THAT PLACEMENT OF PENDING
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AMERICAN CANDIDATES WAS IMMINENT.

3. OF TOTAL OF 22 ORIGINAL MEXICAN CANDIDATES, 13 HAVE BEEN PLACED (OF WHOM 2 DROPPED OUT AFTER CALL FORWARDS WERE ISSUED, ONE FOR POOR ENGLISH, ONE FOR ANOTHER COMMITMENT) AND NINE ARE STILL PENDING. OF THE NINE, DEPARTMENT UNDERSTANDS THAT RESPONSES FROM POTENTIAL SPONSORS ARE POSITIVE AND PLACEMENT SHOULD BE CONFIRMED DEFINITELY WITHIN A WEEK OR SO FOR FOUR MORE (TWO FOR FOOD TECHNOLOGY AND TWO FOR WATER POLLUTION). THE DEPARTMENT JUST RECEIVED DOCUMENTATION ON A SUBSTITUTE CANDIDATE FOR ONE THAT CANCELLED DUE TO POOR ENGLISH, AND WE EXPECT TO PLACE HIM WITH NO TROUBLE AT G.E. AS REQUESTED. DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN ADVISED THAT CONACYT IS TRYING TO GET CONFIRMATION FROM CANDIDATES THAT THEY ARE STILL INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING. INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION (I.I.E.) HAS BEEN THOROUGHLY BRIEFED ON STATUS OF PROGRAM AND WILL SEEK PLACEMENT OF REMAINING INTERESTED CANDIDATES WHEN CONFIRMATION OF THEIR AVAILABILITY IS RECEIVED FROM CONACYT.

4. EMBASSY WILL RECALL THAT IN EARLY 1974 CONACYT VERY UNHAPPY THAT US HAD NOT COMPLIED WITH ITS RESPONSIBILITY IN MAKING EXCHANGE A TWO-WAY STREET. LACK OF US PARTICIPANTS, DUE TO NO FUNDING, WAS SOURCE OF ENDLESS MEXICAN COMPLAINTS, AND DEPARTMENT RESOLVED TO TACKLE IT. OUR RECORDS SHOW THAT CONACYT OFFICIALS SAID THAT DECISION ON APPROVAL OF PLACEMENT APPLICATIONS FOR U.S. PARTICIPANTS WOULD BE MADE WITHIN 45 DAYS. IT WAS EXPLAINED THEN THAT US COULD NOT FIND TECHNICIANS INTERESTED IN MEXICAN TRAINING EXPERIENCE, AND THAT OUR PARTICIPANTS WOULD PROBABLY ALL BE STUDENTS. IN JULY 1974 GRANTS WERE AWARDED TO TWO U.S. STUDENTS ACCEPTED BY CONACYT. DEPARTMENT FORWARDED ELEVEN MORE APPLICATIONS OF QUALIFIED CANDIDATES IN MARCH 1975. ON APRIL 7, EMBASSY REPORTED THAT CONACYT CONSIDERED THAT THESE APPLICATIONS CONTAINED SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO BEGIN PROCESSING AND PLACEMENT, AND THAT TENTATIVE REPORTS OF PLACEMENT AND APPROVAL WOULD BE GIVEN DESPITE FACT THAT APPLICATION WAS NOT ON PROPER FORM OR IN SPANISH. (IN SOME CASES PLACEMENT WAS ARRANGED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AHEAD OF TIME BY THE CANDIDATE HIMSELF AND ALL THAT WAS REQUIRED WAS CONACYT APPROVAL.) DEPARTMENT RECEIVED CONACYT SPANISH FORMS IN LATE APRIL. TO DATE NONE OF THE AMERICAN CANDIDATES HAVE BEEN PLACED AND SOME ARE DROPPING OUT IN DESPAIR, AT A COST OF DOLS 7,000.00 EACH TO CUA BUDGET. WHILE DEPARTMENT ACKNOWLEDGES THAT SOME OF FORMALITIES (E.G., SPANISH LANGUAGE CONACYT FORMS) HAVE NOT BEEN COMPLIED WITH, DEPARTMENT IS

CONCERNED MORE WITH SUBSTANCE OF CONACYT UNRESPONSIVE ATTITUDE, IN FACE OF USG BEST EFFORTS TO COMPLY WITH AGREEMENT REGARDING BOTH MEXICAN TECHNICIANS PLACEMENT AND PROPOSING US CANDIDATES.

5. AS EMBASSY AWARE (STATE) RESPONSIBILITY FOR PLACEMENT OF MEXICAN CANDIDATES HAS BEEN GIVEN TO IIE WITH ARA/MEEX CONTINUING TO PROVIDE SUPERVISION AND ACT AS CONDUIT FOR COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN MEXICAN EMBASSY SCIENCE COUNSELOR AND IIE. IIE HAS UNDERGONE THOROUGH BRIEFINGS AND HAS ALL FILES; THEY ARE ALREADY WORKING ON SOME CASES. DEPARTMENT HOPEFUL THAT WITH FUNDING FOR TUITION NOW AVAILABLE, AND MORE ADEQUATE PER DIEM (DEPARTMENT UNDERSTANDS CONACYT RAISED STANDARD PER DIEM 40 TO DOLS 508 MONTHLY, RETROACTIVE TO JULY 1) PROGRAM WILL OPERATE MORE SMOOTHLY FOR MEXICAN CANDIDATES. SEVERAL MONTHS OF EXPERIENCE WITH IIE SHOULD GIVE US SOME INSIGHT ON WHAT PROBLEMS WE MAY STILL FACE.

6. DEPARTMENT CONSEQUENTLY BELIEVES THAT MEETING OF TYPE PROPOSED BY CONACYT WOULD NOT BE TIMELY OR PRODUCTIVE ON AUGUST 11. THERE IS LITTLE POINT IN DISCUSSING THE PROCEDURES AND PLACEMENT OF AMERICAN CANDIDATES UNTIL THE EXPERIENCE OF A FIRST SIGNIFICANT CYCLE OF PLACEMENTS IS BEHIND US. DEPARTMENT BELIEVES IT IS PREMATURE AND INOPPORTUNE TO DISCUSS ISSUES INVOLVING POLICY (SUCH AS REVISING OF PLAN OF OPERATIONS) AT THIS TIME. DEPARTMENT HAS INFORMED DE ALBA ACCORDINGLY. DE ALBA THEN PROPOSED INSTEAD THAT DIRECTOR OF CONACYT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM MEET WITH DEPARTMENT AND IIE OFFICIALS TO EXPLAIN CONACYT PROCEDURES, AND CONCERNS REGARDING PLACEMENT OF MEXICANS. THIS WAS AGREED TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND MEETING SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST 11. IF EMBASSY RECEIVES INQUIRIES, PLEASE DRAW ON THE ABOVE, AS APPROPRIATE, FOR YOUR RESPONSE. DEPARTMENT HOPES MEETING TO DISCUSS MORE WIDE-RANGING TOPICS CAN BE SCHEDULED AS SOON AS EXPERIENCE UNDER EXISTING PLACEMENT SYSTEMS INDICATES IT WOULD BE PRODUCTIVE.

7. DE ALBA ASSERTED THAT CONACYT UNDERSTANDS THAT DEADLINE FOR ADVICE OF CONACYT'S DECISION ON U.S. CANDIDATES IS AUGUST 6. (FYI-DEPARTMENT KNOWS OF NO REPEAT NO BASIS FOR UNDERSTANDING OF AN AUGUST 6 DEADLINE, OR ANY SPECIFIC SUSPENSE DATE).

8. ACTION REQUESTED: IF SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON PLACEMENT US STUDENTS NOT RECEIVED BY COB AUGUST 6, EMBASSY IS

REQUESTED TO WITHDRAW PENDING APPLICATIONS AND ARRANGE
AFFILIATIONS DIRECT. BELIEVE IIE LOCAL OFFICE PREPARED
TO ASSIST.

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